

AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED BY CLAIRE PETERSON IN *THE BOY NEXT DOOR* MOVIE

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Abstract

In social interaction, people need to be aware of others' faces to consider their feelings or maintain the relationship. In order to save a person's face, people are supposed to use politeness strategies. The objective of the paper is to describe the types and functions of politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson in *The Boy Next Door* movie. This research belongs to discourse analysis and uses the theory of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. The data is movie script of *The Boy Next Door* movie which is in the form of words and utterances. Based on the analysis, there are 37 utterances containing politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson. In detail, she uses the strategy of bald on record seven times or 18.9%, positive politeness 20 times or 54%, negative politeness 9 times or 24.4%, and off record once or 2.7%. The most frequent politeness strategy used by Claire Peterson is "offer and promise" which belongs to positive politeness strategy. This strategy is used 7 times or 18.9%. In general, she uses politeness strategies to maintain and build good relationship with the others in her daily life.

Keywords: politeness strategies, function, Discourse Analysis

Introduction

Humans are social beings who live out the life in the company of other humans. As the part of society, people are involved in persistent social interaction involving all forms of communication. In order to communicate with each other, people need an instrument called language. According to Hornby (2000) language is a system of communication in speech and writing used by people of a particular country. In other words, language is a system of communication used by people to communicate or interact with each other. The relationship between language and society is deeply rooted. Moreover, language performs various functions in the society and the society does the same way. It means that language is societal which shapes daily interaction, and is also shaped by society.

In case of social interaction, people need to be aware on others' faces in order to consider their feelings or maintain relationship with others. According to Yule (1996) face means the public self-image of a person. Furthermore, in daily conversation people should avoid an act that may threaten others' faces. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) acts that infringe on the hearers' need to maintain his/ her self-esteem, and be respected is called "Face-Threatening Acts or FTAs. In order to maintain and save person's face, people are supposed to use politeness strategies. Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that there are four types of politeness strategies. They are bald on-record, negative politeness, positive politeness, and off-record strategy.

Politeness strategies are often used in real life situation in order to maintain each other's faces. Furthermore, movie is a kind of entertainment that reveals a real life situation. It is the reason why a movie including its movie script is suitable to be analysed in terms of its types and functions of politeness strategies. In this research, the researchers analysed politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson in *The Boy Next Door* movie. The objectives of this study are (1) to describe the types of politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson in *The Boy Next Door* movie and (2) to describe the functions of politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson in *The Boy Next Door* movie.

Literature Review

In daily life people need an instrument called language in order to communicate or interact with each other. In other words, language is an important media of interaction for human in daily communication. According to Hornby (2000) language is a system of communication in speech and writing used by people of a particular country. In brief, language is a system of communication in the form of sounds and words used by humans being to communicate and express their thoughts, feelings, idea, and meaning.

The relationship between language and society is deeply rooted. Furthermore, social context looks at relationships between language and society and looks at language as people use it. Sociolinguistics deals with issues related to language and society. It means that language is societal. According to Hudson (1996) sociolinguistics is the study of language in relationship to society. It means that the use of a language has to be appropriate to the context in which it is used. In summary, Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and social variable.

In daily conversation, people use language to interact, communicate, or express their thought, idea, meaning or feelings with each other in form of speech. According to Yule (1996) people perform action through utterances when they attempt to express themselves. Besides, Searle (1969) asserts that speech act is the basic unit of linguistic communication. Based on the definition above, the researchers conclude that speech act is the action that people actually perform through their utterances in daily conversation. Moreover, Austin (1962) states that in uttering sentence, people do not only say something but also do something. Besides, he categorizes speech acts into three parts. Those are locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act.

There are four types of positive politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). They are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record.

1. Bald on Record

Bald on-record strategies usually do not attempt to minimize the threat to the addressee's face. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) bald on record strategy is a direct way of saying things, without any minimization to the imposition, in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way. Bald on record strategies consist of: great urgency; speaking as if great efficiency is necessary; task-oriented; little or no desire to maintain someone's face; alerting; welcomes; offers; and request.

For Example:

a) Strategy 1 : Great urgency

For example : *Watch out!*

b) Strategy 2 : Speaking as if great efficiency is necessary

For example : *Hear me out: ...*

c) Strategy 3 : Task-oriented

For example : *Pass me the hammer.*

2. Positive Politeness

Positive politeness strategy is usually seen in groups of friends, or where people know each other fairly well. Brown and Levinson (1987) state that positive politeness strategy attempts to attend the hearer's interest, wants, and goods. Positive politeness strategies consist of: notice, attend to hearer; exaggerate; intensify interest to the hearer; use in-group identity marker; seek agreement; avoid disagreement; presuppose/ rise / assert common ground; joke; conveying that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators; assert or presuppose speaker's knowledge of and

concerns for hearer's wants; offer, promise; be optimistic; include both speaker and hearer in the activity; give or ask for reason; assume or assert reciprocity: fulfilling hearer's wants; and give gifts to the hearer.

For example:

- a) Notice, Attend to Hearer (His Interest, Wants, Needs and Goods)

What a beautiful vase this is! Where did it come from?

(Brown and Levinson, 1987: 103)

- b) Exaggerate (Interest, Approval, Sympathy with the Hearer)

What a fantastic garden you have!

(Brown and Levinson, 1987: 104)

- c) Strategy 3: Intensify Interest to the Hearer

I never imagined that there were thousands beautiful girls in Jim's party last night!

(Brown and Levinson, 1987: 106)

3. Negative Politeness

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) negative politeness is "the heart of respect behavior" and it is "more specific and focused". Negative politeness consists of: be conventionally indirect; question, hedge; be pessimistic; minimize the imposition; give deference; apologize; impersonalize speaker and hearer state the FTAs as an instance of a general rule' nominalize and go on record as not incurring a debt or as not indebted hearer.

For example:

- a) Question, Hedge

Won't you open the door? (Which could be glossed as, "I request that you open the door")

(Brown and Levinson, 1987: 145)

- b) Minimize the Imposition

Could I have a taste (a slice) of that cake?

(Brown and Levinson's example, 1996: 177)

4. Off Record

Brown and Levinson (1987) assert that off-record uses indirect language and removes the speaker from the potential to be imposed. In this case, the hearer must make an inference to recover what is intended. Besides, it indicates that if the speakers want to avoid their responsibility of doing FTAs they can employ the strategy. Off record strategies consist of: give hints; be vague; and be sarcastic; or joking.

- a) Give Hints

For example : *it is cold in here.*

- b) Be Vague

For example : *perhaps someone should have been more responsible.*

Politeness strategies are often used in real life situation in order to maintain each other's face. Furthermore, movie is a kind of entertainment that reveals a real life situation. It is the reason why a movie including its movie script is suitable to be analysed in terms of its types of politeness strategies. In this research, the researchers chose the movie entitled *The Boy Next Door* because it represents the common problems that people face in daily life. Besides, Claire Peterson, the main character of the movie, acts as an English Literature teacher of John Monroe High School. In the other words, this movie not only reveals the daily life situations faced by common people but also the education side, especially in the United States.

Method

In this Study, the researchers used discourse analysis since the data in the form of words and sentences. According to Brown and Yule (1983) discourse analysis is committed to an investigation of what language is used for. It is usually defined as “language beyond the sentence” and its analysis is usually concerned with the study of language in text and conversation. Based on the definitions above, the researchers conclude that discourse analysis is the study about language use of social interaction manifested in written text and conversation. In this research, the researchers used discourse analysis to analyze the types and the function of politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson in *The Boys Next Door* Movie.

Discussion

Based on the data analysis presented in appendix, there are 37 utterances containing politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson in *The Boy Next Door* movie. In detail, she uses types of politeness strategies in categories of: 1) bald on record strategies that contains: great urgency once (2.7%); task-oriented once (2.7%); welcomes twice (5.4%); request twice (5.4%); 2) positive politeness strategies that contains: notice, attend to the hearer 6 times (16.2%); exaggerate twice (5.4%); use in-group identity maker once (2.7%); seek agreement (5.4%); offer, promise 7 times (18.9%); be optimistic once (2.7%); include both speaker and hearer in the activity once (2.7%); 3) negative politeness strategies that contains: question, hedge 6 times (16.2%); give deference twice (5.4%); minimize the imposition once (2.7%); 4) off-record strategy that contains; give hints once (2.7%).

Here are some discussions of the types of politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson.

a) Bald on Record- Task Oriented

Datum 12 (12/BoR/TO)

Kevin : Oh, no, dude, you don't wanna do that. They call her "The Crusher"

Claire : Is that what they call me?

Kevin : Yes.

Claire : Kevin? **Carry your own plate. Clean up all the dishes!**

This conversation happens in backyard when Claire and her family just finished having a lunch. Actually Claire commands Kevin spontaneously because she feels uncomfortable about the topic being discussed. The datum shows Claire's contribution to Kevin expressed in a direct, unambiguous and clear way. She expresses her utterance without avoiding FTAs toward his face. Claire uses this strategy in order to give a task to him to carry and clean up the dishes as soon as possible.

b) Positive Politeness - Be Optimistic

Datum 33 (33/PP/BO)

Kevin : Mom, Seriously, come on, tonight has gotta be perfect, all right? Because Allie Callahan's the most beautiful girl in school and I just never thought she'd actually go out with me. Okay, please, stop.

Claire : Well, she obviously knows quality when she sees it. **She'll love it!** Come on!

The conversation happens when Kevin is going to go to the party with Allie Callahan. In this conversation, Kevin does not feel confident about his appearance. The datum shows Claire's contribution to Kevin expressed using the strategy of being optimistic. In the conversation, Claire uses this strategy to convince Kevin to be more confident about his appearance.

c) Negative Politeness - Hedge

Datum 5 (05/NP/HED)

Claire : Does she still work there?

Garret : Claire, it doesn't matter.

Claire : **No, I guess it doesn't matter**

The conversation happens in dining room. In this conversation, Claire actually feels jealous with Garret because he still works with his new secretary during his business trip in San Francisco. The datum shows Claire's contribution to Garret expressed using negative politeness strategy especially for hedging strategy. In the conversation, she says, "*No, I guess it doesn't matter*" to Garret in order to minimize the FTAs that may threaten his face or both their faces. By using this strategy, she can increase the probability of Garret's acceptance.

d) Off Record - Give Hints

Datum 23 (23/OR/GH)

Claire : I mean, **we're in limbo here**

Garret : What do you mean?

The conversation happens in front of the limbo. In this case, Claire indirectly talks to Garret about their plan to come back to their house. The datum shows Claire's contribution to Garret expressed using "off record" strategy especially for the strategy of giving hints. In the conversation, she says, "*I mean, we're in limbo here*" to suggest Garret indirectly that they need to come back to their house. In this case, Garret should make an inference to recover what is intended by Claire.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, there are 37 utterances containing politeness strategies used by Claire Peterson. In detail, she uses bald on record strategy seven times or 18.9%, the strategy of positive politeness 20 times or 54%, the strategy of negative politeness 9 times or 24.4%, the strategy of off record once or 2.7%. The politeness strategy which is most frequently used by Claire Peterson is "offer and promise" which belongs to positive politeness strategy. This strategy is used 7 times or 18.9%. In general, Claire Peterson uses politeness strategy when she wants someone to do something, satisfies someone else, or minimizes the FTAs that may threaten the hearers' faces. In other words, she uses politeness strategies to maintain good relationship with others in her daily life. In this research, the researchers draw some suggestions for the following parties: students of English education study program. The researchers suggest the students to apply the theory of politeness strategy in their daily conversation since it is very important to maintain a good relationship with others; English Lecturer. The researchers suggest English lecturers to use the dialog of the movie as the interesting media of learning politeness strategy.

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